|  |
| --- |
| **Title of Research Presentation: “Tobacco and alcohol use are playing critical role in the interaction of social determinants of non-communicable diseases in Nepal”: a systems perspective** |
| **Background:** Tobacco and alcohol use are major behavioural risks in developing countries like Nepal contributing to rapid increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs). This causal relationship is further complicated by the broader social determinants such as socio-political context, socio-economic factors and health system. Systems approach has potential to facilitate understanding and initiating action on such complex problems. The objective of this paper was to describe the role of tobacco and alcohol use in the dynamic interaction of social determinants of NCDs in Nepal.**Method:** The study was a qualitative study design. Data was collected by interviewing 63 key informant at both policy and two case districts (Bhaktapur and Morang) and conducting 12 focus group discussions at selected communities in the two case districts. The study tools were informed by the study framework adapted from the *Social Determinants of Health Framework* of WHO. The data analysis involved case study based thematic analysis and framing (*Framework Approach*) and qualitative system dynamics modelling. The study also involved three sense making sessions with policy level and local stakeholders. **Results:** Five key themes emerged during the data analysis. The first theme discussed how habit, misconception and complacency relating to alcohol and tobacco use contributed to the use of tobacco and alcohol. The second and third theme highlighted that decline in community capital and gendered social constructs influenced tobacco and alcohol use. In the fourth theme, socio-economic status of families/communities was discussed as a potential root cause of habit of tobacco and alcohol products. The fifth theme discussed health and social system’s lack of organization, leadership and resources to tackle tobacco and alcohol issues and NCDs. **Discussion:** Tobacco and alcohol use was a key causal linkage within the dynamic interactions of the social determinants of NCDs in Nepal. Controlling tobacco and alcohol use needed an urgent multi-sectoral response led by health system by strengthening community based healthcare delivery system and enforcing regulatory and monitoring measures. Health system should also take lead in coordinating with non-health sectors to influence the broader socio-economic determinants including reducing poverty and social inequities and strengthening community capital. **Keywords:** NCDs; tobacco; alcohol; social determinants; systems thinking; Nepal |